

publics. And it is beyond doubt that it is only in republics that the common welfare is observed. . . . When there is a prince, it happens, on the contrary, that that which is good for him is hurtful to the city, and that which is good for the city is hurtful to him ; so that, directly tyranny has taken the place of free institutions, the least evil that can happen to that city is that it should make no further progress in power and riches."

The writer rises to generous enthusiasm as he recalls the great deeds of republican Romans like Cincinnatus and Marcus Regulus, whose patriotism, simplicity, probity, devotion to the service of their country strike a keenly responsive chord in the otherwise astute and opportunist philosopher. Only free institutions, popular government, could produce characters like these. Monarchy, far less absolute monarchy, does not breed the highest virtues. Absolute monarchy is only defensible, nay indispensable, when it is necessary to reunite a nation or found a State—as an extraordinary expedient, that is. It is not good as an ordinary form of government, is hurtful in the long-run ; for if the absolute monarch, the founder of the State, does not resign the government to the people, or at least does not share it with them, as does the King of France with his Parliament, the consequences to the State are evil. A dictatorship like that of the Romans may be useful, but only if it is temporary and legally limited. Unlimited power is always hurtful.

And yet he does not shrink, even in the "Discourses," from investing his legislator with absolute power as the creator of the State. With Machiavelli the State is not a growth but a mechanism, and in his capacity as maker of a State the legislator is superior to all moral laws—in the "Discourses" as well as in the "Prince." If State necessity requires the commission of crimes—the massacre of opponents, for instance—he must ruthlessly commit them. He must be equal to any action, however unscrupulous, in order to attain his end. As this embraces the good of the whole, the interest of the few has no claim whatever to recognition. Their lives are of no value whatever. It is not what should be, but what is, according to the teaching of history, that Machiavelli sets before us. He is terribly logical, yet he is enigmatic. He